

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A contactor which is used for testing electric characteristics of an object to be tested, said contactor comprising:

a contactor board;

a plurality of conductive members formed through the contactor board;

a plurality of beam members each having a tip end and a base end at its both ends in which one end of the base end is fixed to the conductive member of the contactor board, at least a conductive layer is provided between both the ends, and each beam member has a step, which is separated from the contactor board between the tip end and the base end, ~~which is connected to each conductive member~~; and

a contact terminal member provided at the tip end of each beam member in which the contact terminal member is formed integrally with the conductive layer of the beam member.

Claim 2 (Original): The contactor according to claim 1, wherein the contact terminal member is mainly formed of essentially the same material as the conductive layer of the beam member.

Claim 3 (Original): The contactor according to claim 2, wherein the conductive layer comprises one selected from the group consisting of nickel, copper, titanium, palladium, platinum, gold, tungsten, alloys of these metals, and compounds of these metals.

Claim 4 (Original): The contactor according to claim 1, wherein the contact terminal member comprises a high-hardness conductive metal, an alloy or metal compounds thereof.

Claim 5 (Original): The contactor according to claim 4, wherein the high-hardness conductive metal is selected from titanium, tungsten, and alloys and metal compounds thereof.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing the contactor described in claim 1 to form a beam member and a contact terminal member, comprising the steps of:

forming a recess in a silicon substrate, said recess having such a cross section that deepens away from a surface of the silicon substrate according to a pattern corresponding to a step shape of the beam member and being deepest at its bottom;

forming a silicon layer on said recess;

forming a hole having a shape corresponding to the contact terminal member at the deepest position in said recess; and

forming a deposition on the silicon layer and the hole to constitute the conductive layer of the beam member and the contact terminal member.

Claim 7 (Original): The method for manufacturing the contactor according to claim 6, wherein the step of forming the silicon layer comprises doping with boron.

Claim 8 (Original): The method for manufacturing the contactor according to claim 6, which further comprises a step of directly joining the base end of the beam member to the conductive member of the contactor board.

Claim 9 (Original): The method for manufacturing the contactor according to claim 8, wherein the joining is anode joining.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A probe card for testing electric characteristics of an object to be tested, comprising[[:]]:

a contactor described in claim 1;

a card board having a plurality of second conductive members arranged corresponding to the plurality of conductive members of the contactor; and

an electric connection member interposed between the contactor and the card board, said electric connection member serving to electrically interconnect each conductive member of the contactor and each second conductive member of the card board, wherein said electric connection member has a cushioning structure.

Claim 11 (Canceled).

Claim 12 (Original): The probe card according to claim 10, wherein said electric connection member is formed by a deposition process.

Claim 13 (Original): The probe card according to claim 10, wherein said electric connection member has an essentially  $\Omega$ -shaped structure.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The probe card according to claim [[11]] 10, wherein said contactor board is an insulating board.

Claim 15 (Original): The probe card according to claim 10, wherein an elastic film is interposed between the contactor board and the card board.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A contactor which is used to test electric characteristics of an object to be tested, comprising[[:]]:

a contactor board;

at least one conductive member formed through the contactor board;

at least one beam member, which has one of a step shape and a slope shape and has its a tip end and a base end connected, one end of the base end being fixed to the at least one conductive member of the contactor board, wherein in the beam member one of the step shape and the slope shape is separated from the contactor board between the tip end and the base end; and

a contact terminal member provided at [[a]] the tip end of the at least one beam member.

Claim 17 (Original): The contactor according to claim 16, wherein said beam member has a conductive layer between the tip end and the base end, and said contact terminal member is formed integrally with the conductive layer of the beam member.

Claim 18 (Original): The contactor according to claim 16, wherein said step-shaped beam member comprises a plurality of step portions and a coupling portion for coupling these step portions,

at least one of the plurality of coupling portions couples in an inclined manner the two step portions disposed above and below the coupling portions.

Claim 19 (Original): The contactor according to claim 16, wherein said conductive member has a frusto-conical shape, and the base end of the beam member is connected to the surface of the frusto-cone having a larger area.